

## Petit Jury Frequently Asked Questions

### ***Why do I have to serve in a city that is not in the county I live in?***

The United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina is divided into four divisions which have been designated as points of holding court. Each of the four divisions are made up of surrounding counties as follows:

<b>Asheville</b>	<b>Bryson City</b>	<b>Charlotte</b>	<b>Statesville</b>
Avery	Cherokee	Anson	Alexander
Buncombe	Clay	Gaston	Alleghany
Haywood	Graham	Union	Ashe
Henderson	Jackson	Mecklenburg	Caldwell
Madison	Macon		Catawba
Mitchell	Swain		Iredell
Transylvania			Lincoln
Yancey			Watauga
Burke			Wilkes
Cleveland			
McDowell			
Polk			
Rutherfordton			

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### ***What do I do when I receive a summons and questionnaire?***

Complete the questionnaire to the best of your ability, sign it and return it in the enclosed envelope. There is a space on the back of the form if you wish to write a message. If you claim a medical hardship you must include a doctor's note. If you recently served jury duty in another court, you must include a copy of your jury certificate. Your summons contains important information regarding your scheduled appearance date and instructions to call the night before your scheduled appearance date. Please keep this information.

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### ***What if the summons I received is for a family member?***

If you receive a summons for a family member who is ill; deceased; not able to read or write or is a student out of town, please complete the questionnaire to the best of your ability and make a notation on the back of the form as to your relation to the person summoned and sign your name. Then return the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope.

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### ***How often must I serve ?***

A person is not required to serve jury duty more often than once every two years. If you have served in the United States District Court or a North Carolina State Court within the last two years, and you wish to be excused, please mail a copy of your official jury certificate, together with your questionnaire, in the return envelope.

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### ***How long will I serve?***

Jurors for the Western District of North Carolina are generally summoned for a three week period. Jurors serving in the Asheville and Bryson City Divisions will generally appear more than one time for jury selections during this three week period and be required to attend while seated on a jury trial. Jurors serving in the Charlotte and Statesville Divisions will generally report for jury selections on the first day of the three week term and then only be required to appear, if selected for a case, while that case is being tried. Trials in the Western District of North Carolina usually last from two to three days each.

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### ***Must I call the night before I appear for jury duty?***

The Court's schedule sometimes changes at the last minute, therefore it is important to call the telephone number printed on your summons on the evening before the summons date. You will not need to listen for a jury number, you will hear a recorded message available after 5:00 pm the day before your scheduled date of service. The recording may direct you to report to the courthouse on the summons date or it may delay your date to report by up to one week.

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### ***Can I get a postponement or permanent excuse?***

If you would like to postpone your jury service to a more convenient time, use the Remarks section on the back of your questionnaire indicating when you can serve within the next six months. If you are seeking a permanent excuse, mail the questionnaire back with a note of explanation and/or any supporting documentation such as a doctor's note, certificate of prior jury service or proof of a new address.

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### ***Will I be paid for my jury service?***

The U.S. District Court will pay you, by check, an attendance fee of \$40.00 per day plus round trip mileage from your zip code area and parking (see below for parking rates). Payment vouchers and checks are processed on a weekly basis, therefore if you appear more than one day you may receive more than one check for your service. The attendance payment is taxable income and should be declared. Jurors who earn over \$600 in attendance income in one calendar year will receive a 1099 Form.

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***Where do I park?***

**Asheville Jurors** should park in the parking deck across from the federal courthouse or in any public parking lot. Jurors will be reimbursed \$7.00 per day for parking, no matter what lot you park in.

**Statesville Jurors** should park in the lot beside Charlotte Observer/Iredell Bureau building. Parking in this lot is free. If you receive a parking ticket please turn it into the jury clerk and it will be taken care of for you.

**Charlotte Jurors** are encouraged to park in the Preferred Parking lot next to the Federal Courthouse on the corner of Graham and Trade Streets or any public parking lot. Jurors will be reimbursed \$7.00 for parking for their first day of service. If you are selected for a case and are required to report on further days, jurors must park in the Preferred Parking lot next to the building to receive a pre-paid parking voucher.

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***Is there a dress code?***

While no formal dress code exists, jurors are requested to dress in a manner respectful to the Court. You will have to pass through a metal detector each time you enter the courthouse, therefore you may not want to wear steel toe shoes and leave excess metal and jewelry at home to speed your entry.

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***Can I bring my cellular telephone, tape recorder, camera, beeper or computer?***

***TAPE RECORDS, CAMERAS, CELLULAR TELEPHONES, BEEPERS, LAPTOP COMPUTERS, PALM PILOTS OR ELECTRONIC DEVICES OF ANY KIND ARE PROHIBITED IN ALL OF OUR COURTHOUSES.*** You will be directed to return any of these items to your vehicle before you are permitted into the courthouse. Public pay telephones are available inside the courthouse.

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How can I speak to a jury clerk?

To reach the jury department please call one of the following numbers. Please keep in mind that there is one jury clerk in each office and we handle a great deal of calls. If you reach a voice mail, please leave a message and your call will be answered as soon as possible.

**Asheville** - 1-800-398-3001 - Becky Ponder

**Charlotte** - 1-800-859-8060 - Susan Calkins

**Statesville** - 1-800-488-5834 - Tammy Evans

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A word of thanks.....

By serving jury duty you are participating in the administration of justice. There is no more valuable service that a citizen can perform in support of our democratic Government than the good faith performance of jury duty. We hope you find your jury service to be an interesting and rewarding experience.